

**Abstract 655**

**TITLE:** An intervention to reduce HIV/STD risk in adolescents accessing a school-based health Clinic

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**ISSUE:** Increasing rates of HIV infection and other STD's among adolescents and young adults warrant appropriate and effective HIV/STD prevention projects targeting this population. Unfortunately, school-based programs are often laden with abstinence-only messages or simply provision of information. Programs are needed which assist adolescents in adopting the behavior skills needed to reduce their risk for HIV/STD's.

**SETTING:** The project targets youth at risk for HIV/STD's receiving health care services in an urban high school-based health clinic in the Midwest.

**PROJECT:** The goal of the project is to assist youth in adopting behavior skills needed to reduce their risk for HIV/STD's. The intervention consists of an individual HIV/STD prevention counseling and voluntary HIV testing session and a small group behavior change intervention. The small group intervention consists of a series of three 90-minute sessions. The group sessions provide: (1) information about HIV/STD; (2) decision making, communication, and assertiveness skills training; (3) negotiation skills; (4) instruction and demonstration on proper use of barrier protection; (5) peer group support.

**RESULTS:** Data collected on participants at baseline, immediately following and 1 month following the intervention. Measures include HIV knowledge, attitudes toward peer pressure, abstinence and condom use, self-perception of HIV risk, confidence, and HIV/STD risk behavior. To date, twenty-two adolescents have completed participation in the intervention. Immediately following: 73% of participants reported increases in HIV knowledge, 3% reported more positive attitudes toward HIV prevention behaviors, 64% reported increased or stable (I/S) self-perception of HIV risk, 64% reported I/S confidence levels, 73% planned to have sex with just one person and the remaining 27% planned abstinence, 82% planned to use condoms "every time" they had sex, the remaining 18% planned abstinence. At 1 month following the intervention: 67% reported increased HIV knowledge, 61% reported more positive attitudes toward HIV prevention behaviors, 44% reported I/S self-perception of HIV risk, and 78% reported I/S confidence levels. Regarding risk behaviors 44% had been abstinent. 50% had sex with 1 partner, 70% had used a condom during their last sex including 60% of those reporting they had not used a condom during their last sex at baseline.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** Small group, skill-building interventions may influence adolescents' participation in HIV/STD prevention behaviors. School based health clinics should consider employing these interventions in an attempt to influence adolescents' HIV/STD risk behavior.

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